

The City of Bethlehem New Zoning Ordinance



Process

- Comprehensive Plan adopted March 2009
- Monthly Task Force meetings
- Public meetings first held in Fall 2009
- Final draft released May 2010
- Continued public review
- Planning Commission recommendation
- City Council approval

Purpose of Zoning Ordinance

Promotes public health, safety & general welfare by:

- Encouraging most appropriate use of land
- Conserving the value of land and buildings
- Lessening the congestion of traffic
- Protection of important natural features
- Providing for adequate light and air
- Ensuring safety during fire, flood and other dangers
- Facilitating adequate provision of public infrastructure
- Guiding and regulating orderly growth and development of the city in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan

Big Ideas



- More user friendly format
- Encourages more appropriate, yet flexible development in the urban core
- Maintain existing, healthy neighborhoods with little transition
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas

Residential Uses

- Outlying areas of the city that are residential will remain so
- Maintain existing densities in neighborhoods
- Conversion of buildings to apartments is no longer permitted in RR



Residential Uses



- RS no longer permits multi-family dwellings or Planned Unit Developments

- Twin homes now added as permitted in RG

- RT and RM residential districts now combined



Work Force Housing Incentives

- Improve opportunities for the provision of work force housing units
- Allows limited increased density for developments over 20 units
- Permitted in RT, CB, IR-R and CM-LTN zoning districts



Green Components

- Green building incentives
- Provisions for solar panels
- Provisions for wind turbines



Design Guidelines

- Added to CG & CL zoning districts to maintain urban style of development
- Build to front lot line or average front setback on block
- Pedestrian access faces front street
- No residential units on first floor
- Parking on rear or sides



Environmental Issues

Floodplains

- Development within a flood fringe district is prohibited , except if a lot was occupied by a building or parking lot within the last 10 years



Environmental Issues



Open Space Development

- Proposed in RR to promote clustering of housing & retain open space in environmentally sensitive areas

Environmental Issues

- Parking lot lighting provisions added
- Tree conservation provisions added



Steep Slope Provisions

- Man made slopes exempted only if they were created less than 50 years prior to plan submission
- Adds maximum slope to finished grade
- Requires retention of tree canopy and restricts tree cutting
- Limitation of area of disturbance in lots with 25% slopes

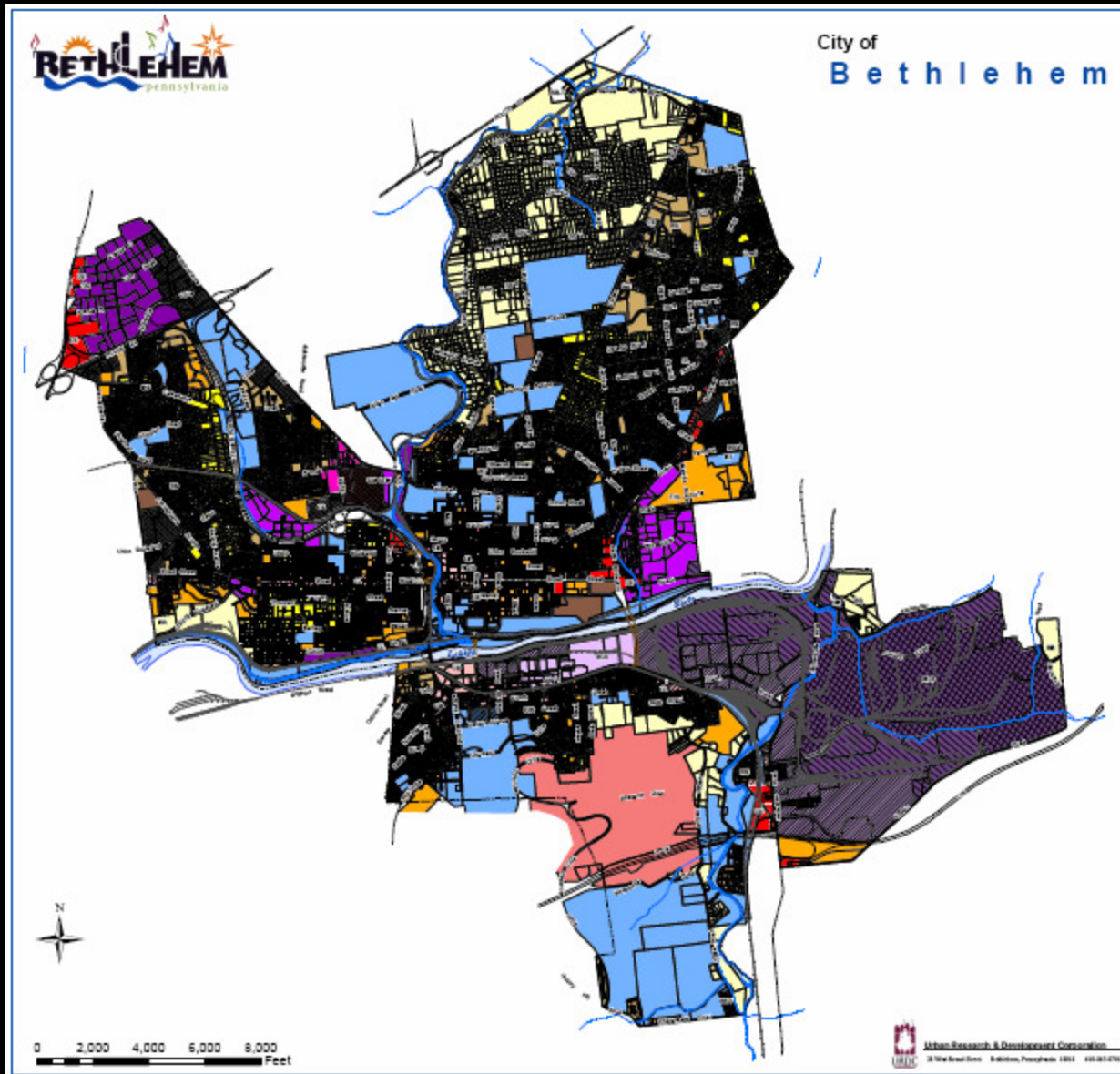


Parking

- Creates shared parking provisions
- Allows for joint use of parking
- Provides criteria for reduction of parking requirements in certain instances



Major Map Revisions



Next Step

- www.bethlehem-pa.gov
- Future workshops
- Planning Commission recommendation
- City Council adoption

